

Message Text

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44 S

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 IO-14 INRE-00

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NSAE-00 OMB-01 DRC-01 /089 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9508

INFO DOD IMMEDIATE

OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF ARMY IMMEDIATE

COMUSCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 4315

COMUSCINCSO FOR GENERAL ROSSON

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, PINS, PINT, PGOV

SUBJECT: SECRETARY CALLAWAY'S CONVERSATIONS IN SANTIAGO JULY 22

1. SUMMARY: OPENING, TOP-LEVEL DISCUSSIONS WITH CHILEAN PRESIDENT AND DEFENSE MINISTER FEATURE RATIONALE FOR JUNTA'S CONDUCT, AND FRANK EXCHANGE ON HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS CONFRONTED BY CHILE AT HOME AND ABROAD. END SUMMARY.

2. SECRETARY CALLAWAY MET WITH DEFENSE MINISTER BONILLA A.M. JULY 22, AND HAD MEETING AND PRIVATE LUNCH WITH PRESIDENT PINOCHET, BEFORE BEGINNING TECHNICAL MEETINGS WITH TOP CHILEAN ARMY PERSONNEL AFTERNOON JULY 22. LATTER REPORTED SEPARATELY. AMBASSADOR PRESENT AT MEETINGS AND LUNCH.

3. AT OPENING SESSION GENERAL BONILLA REVIEWED CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH HAD RESULTED IN SEPTEMBER 11, 1973 COUP, IN TERMS FAMILIAR TO DEPARTMENT. BONILLA EXPOUNDED AT LENGTH ON EXCESSES OF ALLENDE REGIME. STRESSED THAT REGIME'S RESORT TO ILLEGAL PROCEDURES TO MAINTAIN ITS POLICIES AND POSITION; DEPICTED GRAPHICALLY ECONOMIC HARDSHIPS AND CHAOS TO WHICH COUNTRY

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REDUCED; DESCRIBED SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES OF EXTREME LEFT

PARTICIPANTS IN UNIDAD POPULAR COALITION, INCLUDING ILLEGAL ARMS IMPORTS AND MANUFACTURE AND EFFORTS TO SUBVERT ARMED FORCES. EXPLAINED THAT CHILEAN MILITARY, WITH LONG TRADITION OF ABSTENTION FROM ALL POLITICAL ACTIVITY, AT FIRST LOYALLY ATTEMPTED TO SERVE GOVERNMENT. WHEN HOWEVER IT BECAME APPARENT THAT NO OTHER FORCE COULD PREVENT INSTITUTION OF AN EXTREME LEFTIST DICTATORSHIP, WHICH WAS IN PREPARATION, ARMED FORCES YIELDED TO NEAR-UNIVERSAL PUBLIC CLAMOR FOR ACTION AND UNDER-TOOK SEPTEMBER 1973 COUP.

4. NOW, BONILLA CONTINUED, GOVERNMENT WAS ATTEMPTING TO COMBAT MARXIST CONSPIRACY, INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL, DESIGNED TO FORCE COUNTRY BACK INTO SOCIALIST PATH. MASSIVE LEFTIST PROPAGANDA WORLDWIDE HAD GIVEN COMPLETELY MISLEADING IMAGE OF LIFE IN CHILE, AND CHILEANS THEMSELVES DID NOT HAVE RESOURCES ADEQUATELY TO COMBAT THIS PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN. SECRETARY CALLAWAY SHOULD WHILE HE WAS HERE GET INTO STREETS AND ASK POPULATION HOW THEY FELT ABOUT EVENTS IN CHILE, ESPECIALLY IN LOW INCOME AREAS. HE WOULD SEE FOR HIMSELF HOW NORMAL LIFE WAS IN CHILE AND HOW WIDESPREAD SUPPORT FOR GOVERNMENT IS.

5. UNDER QUESTIONING BY SECRETARY AND AMBASSADOR, BONILLA GAVE US SOME INFORMATION AND FIGURES WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST. HE STATED THAT NUMBER OF THOSE KILLED DURING SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1973 FIGHTING WAS ABOUT 1,600 (THIS IS NOT INCONSISTENT WITH OUR ESTIMATE THAT 2,000 TO 2,500 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KILLED IN FIGHTING OR EXECUTED SINCE SEPTEMBER 11; THERE HAVE BEEN NO EXECUTIONS TO OUR KNOWLEDGE SINCE DECEMBER 1973. FURTHER, BONILLA SAID, TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS DETAINED FOR INTERNAL SECURITY OFFENSES OR SUSPICION SINCE SEPTEMBER 11 WAS ABOUT 17,000. OF THESE OVER 11,000 HAD BEEN RELEASED; TOTAL NOW IN CUSTODY WAS BETWEEN 5,000 AND 5,500. MANY OF THOSE DETAINED WERE HELD FOR ONLY A SHORT PERIOD; FOR EXAMPLE, IT HAD BEEN NECESSARY IN SEPTEMBER 1973 TO DETAIN ALL PERSONS IN BUILDINGS FROM WHICH SNIPERS WERE FIRING ON FORCES AROUND MONEDA. WITHIN A FEW DAYS, ALL BUT A FEW OF THESE HAD BEEN RELEASED.

6. BONILLA REPEATED (SEE SANTIAGO 4247) THAT THERE WERE TWO CLASSES OF INTERNAL SECURITY DETAINEES. FIRST WERE THERE

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BECAUSE OF SPECIFIC CHARGES UNDER CHILEAN LAW, INCLUDING OFFENSES UNDER CHILEAN STATE OF WAR AND STATE OF SIEGE. SECOND GROUP WERE BEING HELD IN PREVENTIVE DETENTION, ALSO UNDER AUTHORITY GIVEN TO GOVERNMENT UNDER CHILEAN STATE OF SIEGE REGULATIONS AUTHORIZED UNDER CONSTITUTION YEARS AGO, PERMITTING GOVERNMENT TO MOVE INDIVIDUALS FROM ONE SITE IN COUNTRY TO ANOTHER. (BONILLA REMINDED SECRETARY THAT ALLENDE HAD SOUGHT SIMILAR AUTHORITY FROM CHILEAN CONGRESS, BUT THAT

CONGRESS HAD REFUSED TO GRANT IT.) THIS GROUP WAS DECREASING IN SIZE AS INVESTIGATION OF EACH CASE CONTINUED; MEMBERS OF IT WERE CONTINUALLY BEING RELEASED WITH THE SOLE STIPULATION THAT THEY MUST TAKE NO ACTION WHICH WOULD JEOPARDIZE STATE SECURITY.

7. DISCUSSION COVERED MUCH THE SAME GROUND DURING PRIVATE LUNCH FOR SECRETARY HOSTED BY GENERAL PINOCHET. MOST NOTE-WORTHY WAS PINOCHET'S ASSERTION THAT ALL CHILEAN MILITARY AND INTELLIGENCE SERVICES HAD ISSUED ORDERS THAT THERE MUST BE NO TORTURE OR OTHER EXCESSES. PINOCHET CONFIRMED THAT "TEN OR ELEVEN" INDIVIDUALS FROM A NUMBER OF THESE SERVICES HAD BEEN ARRESTED FOR EXCESSES AGAINST PRISONERS -- WHICH, WE GATHER, INCLUDES ROBBERY OF INDIVIDUALS BEING SEARCHED, ETC., AS WELL AS TORTURE. LIKE PINOCHET, TOP ARMY LEADERS GENERALS BONILLA, BRAVO, AND BRADY INSISTED THAT EFFECTIVE MEASURES HAD BEEN TAKEN TO HALT TORTURE.

8. DURING THIS DISCUSSION SECRETARY CALLAWAY AND AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT CERTAIN MEMBERS OF US CONGRESS AND CERTAIN ORGANS OF PUBLIC OPINION IN US CONTINUED TO BE DISTURBED BY REPORTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CHILE. SECRETARY POINTED OUT THAT WHILE THESE VIEWS MIGHT IGNORE INTERNAL SECURITY REQUIREMENTS WHICH LED TO CURRENT CHILEAN PRACTICES, HE COULD SAY AS FORMER MEMBER OF CONGRESS THAT SUCH SENTIMENT DID EXIST. COMPARING HIS OWN EXPERIENCE IN EFFORT TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTEER ARMY, SECRETARY ADVISED HIS HOSTS TO ENCOURAGE AS MUCH PERSONAL INVESTIGATION AS POSSIBLE ON PART OF RESPONSIBLE AMERICANS INTERESTED -- MAKING AVAILABLE TO THEM OPPORTUNITY TO SEE FOR THEMSELVES WHAT WAS GOING ON IN CHILE. THIS WOULD NOT BY ANY MEANS OVERCOME ALL CRITICISM, BUT MOST OFFICIALS AND PEOPLE OF THE US APPROACHED SUCH PROBLEMS HONESTLY AND WITH OPEN MIND, AND EVENTUALLY -- JUST AS IN
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CASE OF MEDIA VIEWS RE VOLUNTEER ARMY -- SOME OF THE OBSERVERS WOULD REPORT SITUATION OBJECTIVELY. CHILEANS MIGHT NOT RECEIVE COMPLETELY FAIR TREATMENT, BUT THIS WAS BEST COURSE THEY COULD TAKE TO PROTECT THEIR INTERESTS.

9. PINOCHET AND OTHERS PRESENT WERE IMPRESSED WITH SECRETARY'S POINTS. BELIEVE LUNCHEON LED TO BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF USG CONCERNS BY PRESIDENT AND TOP ARMY GENERALS, AND THAT IT WILL BE HELPFUL HERE.

10. THIS MESSAGE CLEARED BY SECRETARY CALLAWAY.
POPPER

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 23 JUL 1974
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Disposition Authority: kelleyw0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
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To: STATE
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